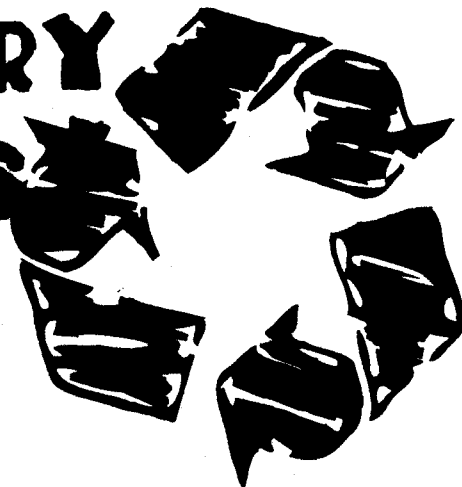


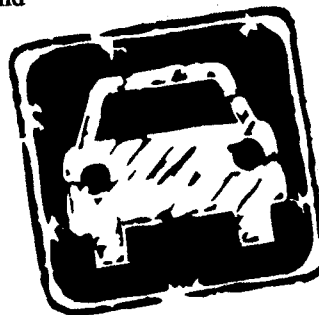
GETTING MERCURY OUT OF CARS



What Auto Recycling Facilities Need To Do
Mercury, a natural element that has been used in switches and thermostats to promote electrical conductivity, can pollute the environment and endanger people's health if not removed from cars properly. America's automobile industry has pledged to systematically phase out the use of mercury switches in the design of new car components.

Though the amount of mercury in cars is small compared to other sources, it is critical that those cars being retired from the vehicle fleet for recycling and disposal have their mercury switches removed safely.

Auto recycling facilities can play a pivotal role in helping to make sure mercury is handled correctly. By removing and collecting hood, interior and trunk convenience lighting assemblies before vehicles are stored, auto recyclers can eliminate 90 percent of the sources of mercury in vehicles. Switch removal, like removal of batteries and fluids, should always be done before vehicles are crushed or shredded. If done properly and efficiently, this step can take only a few minutes to complete.



Why Automotive Recycling Facilities Have An Incentive To Cooperate

Mercury can be released when cars are crushed or shredded, or if the switches corrode with age. Elemental mercury itself is toxic and cannot be broken down into less hazardous compounds. Current federal regulations require yard owners to develop plans to prevent toxic substances, including mercury, from leaving automotive recycling yards in storm water discharges.

Some states have also enacted laws requiring the removal of mercury switches from vehicles before the crushed cars can be sent for metals recycling. The easiest way to prevent these releases is to remove the light switches during normal processing – such as when the battery and fluids are removed.

After The Mercury Is Removed

Storage and management of collected mercury switches is easiest when the switches are removed from the lighting assemblies. This can reduce the amount of storage space required by more than 90 percent. A typical auto recycling facility processing 500 cars a year can store 10 years worth of mercury switches in a one-gallon pail.

Mercury Storage

The ideal means of storage for removed mercury switches is placement in a covered container that is kept in a secure, dry area. Careful storage also ensures that auto recyclers have clear evidence of accountability in the prevention of mercury pollution, which is

required for each toxic substance recyclers manage under the federal storm water permit.

When You're Ready To Take Your Mercury To The Proper Facility

Disposal of the switches is not an option. They must be processed at recycling facilities to recover the mercury.

Questions?

Any questions about your status as a generator of hazardous waste should be directed to your local or state environmental office, which can tell you where your local recycling centers are located.